

OFFICE OF

Department of Environmental Quality

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May 14, 2014

Also Sent Via E-mail

Mr. Robert J. Wyatt **NW Natural** 220 N.W. Second Avenue Portland, OR 97209

Re:

Final Hydraulic Source Control and Containment System Groundwater Model

Update Report

NW Natural "Gasco Site" and Siltronic Corporation Facility

Portland, Oregon **ECSI Nos. 84 and 183**

Dear Mr. Wyatt:

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) reviewed the "Final Hydraulic Source Control and Containment System Groundwater Model Update Report, NW Natural Gasco Site" dated March 2014 (Model Update Report). DEO downloaded a soft copy of the document for review on March 26, 2014. Anchor QEA, LLC (Anchor) prepared the Model Update Report on behalf of NW Natural.

The Model Update Report responds to DEQ's comments on the Revised Model Update Report¹ which were provided to NW Natural in a February 13, 2014 letter with attachments. Attachment 2 of DEQ's February 13th letter included comments from the U.S. Envrironmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA's and DEQ's comments were discussed during a conference call on February 20, 2014.

DEO's comments on the Model Update Report are attached. In addition to DEO, the EPA reviewed the document. The DEQ and EPA comment sets are attached as Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 respectively. The attachments provide additional details regarding the information needed to finalize the report.

The primary purpose of this letter is to inform NW Natural that DEQ approves the Model Update Report subject to NW Natural revising the document consistent with the EPA's and DEQ's attached comments.

DEQ requests that NW Natural revise and resubmit the Model Update Report consistent with the attached comments on or before June 13, 2014.

Anchor QEA, LLC, "Revised Hydraulic Source Control and Containment System Groundwater Model Update Report - NW Natural Gasco Site," dated October 2013 (DEQ downloaded soft copy on October 10, 2013), a report prepared for NW Natural.



Bob Wyatt NW Natural May 14, 2014 Page 2 of 2

Please contact me with questions regarding this letter or the attachments.

Sincerely,

Dana Bayuk Project Manager

Cleanup and Site Assessment Section

Attachments: DEQ Comments

EPA Comments (revisions to Table 3)

Cc: Myron Burr, Siltronic Corporation

Patty Dost, Pearl Legal Group

Alan Gladstone, Davis Rothwell Earle and Xochihua

John Edwards, Anchor Ben Hung, Anchor

Pradeep Mugunthan, Anchor

John Renda, Anchor

Michael Riley, Anchor

Carl Stivers, Anchor

Rob Ede, Hahn & Associates

James Peale, Maul Foster Alongi

Sean Sheldrake, EPA

Rich Muza, EPA

Lance Peterson, CDM Smith

Scott Coffey, CDM Smith

Keith Johnson, NWR/Cleanup & Site Assessment Section

Tom Gainer, NWR/Cleanup & Tanks Section

Henning Larsen, NWR/Cleanup & Tanks Section

ECSI No. 84 File

ECSI No. 183 File

ATTACHMENT 1

DEQ COMMENTS

FINAL HYDRAULIC SOURCE CONTROL AND CONTAINMENT SYSTEM GROUNDWATER MODEL UPDATE REPORT, NW NATURAL GASCO SITE Dated March 2014 (received via download on March 26, 2014)

DEQ Comments sent May 14, 2014

DEQ's comments on the above-referenced report are provided below.

Comment 1, Section 2.2. DEQ requests that Table 3 be referenced in this section of the Model Update Report as the table supplements information presented on assumptions and limitations related to boundary conditions.

Comment 2, Section 2.2.7. The Model Update Report provides contradictory information regarding modeling of the basalt water-bearing zone (WBZ) and does not address DEQ's previous comments¹.

Appendix A provides a copy of NW Natural's February 19, 2014 responses to DEQ's February 13, 2014 comments letter. According to NW Natural's responses to DEQ's comments regarding the basalt (e.g., see Comment 1, General Comment, Basalt as a noflow boundary), "The constant-head boundary in the Upper Alluvium WBZ represents groundwater flow from the basalt to the model domain. The report will clarify that the basalt is a flow boundary (italics added)." However, the first sentence of Section 2.2.7 of the Model Update Report states that, "The model assumes that no-flow boundaries are an appropriate representation of the groundwater flow regime at the upstream and downstream model boundaries along the U.S. Moorings and Siltronic properties and across the basalt bedrock interface at the bottom of the model." The first sentence in the third paragraph makes it clear that, "The basalt bedrock below the model domain is modeled as a no-flow boundary. At the upland model boundary, flows originating from the basalt are captured in the upland constant head boundary condition in the Upper Alluvium WBZ."

DEO continues to maintain that:

- The basalt recharges the Alluvium WBZ; and
- Assuming all groundwater enters the upgradient boundary through the Alluvium WBZ could result in the model under predicting groundwater flux across the site, especially in the deeper portions of the Alluvium WBZ.

Going forward, DEQ understands the basalt is assumed to be a no-flow boundary (at least initially), and all groundwater flow along the southwest (upgradient) boundary enters the model through the upper Alluvium WBZ. From Table 3 of the Model Update Report, DEQ further understands that actual and simulated hydrographs in the lower and deep

¹ See DEQ's February 13, 2014 comments letter; Attachment 1, Comment 1, General Comments – Model Assumptions and Limitations, 1st and 2nd bullets.

Alluvium WBZ will be used to assess the influence of this assumption during calibration. Based on the results of this assessment the basalt no-flow bound may be modified.

DEQ is not requesting that NW Natural alter the initial modeling approach based on these comments. DEQ does request that NW Natural confirm, clarify, or correct our understandings. DEQ anticipates that evaluations of the basalt no-flow boundary will be a focus of the bimonthly modeling status discussions.

Comment 3, Section 2.4.1. NW Natural indicates that the hydraulic conductivity values calculated for PW-08-39 and PW-09-92 represent low and high outliers for the upper Alluvium at the site. DEQ considers the values to represent reasonable site-specific lowend and high-end hydraulic conductivity values for purposes of calibrating the model and simulating flow in the upper Alluvium WBZ.

Comment 4, Section 3.4. This section of the Model Update Report indicates that NW Natural will provide status updates on modeling work every other week. The section should be revised to indicate that Table 3 of the Model Update Report will be revised and submitted prior to each bimonthly update to support discussions.

NW Natural indicates that a "working version" of the model will be provided to DEQ, "...after it is updated, calibrated, and validated using the Phase 1 test data." Based on this information DEQ will expect to receive the model prior to NW Natural initiating the long-term phase (Phase 2) of hydraulic control and containment system testing.

Table 3. DEQ requests that the LNG Basin "Drain Boundary" be added to the "Model Input/Boundary Condition" column. DEQ considers the Drain Boundary to be a model parameter that may change during the modeling process. Adding the parameter to Table 3 will allow changes to be tracked and documented.

Comment 5, Figures. DEQ's February 13, 2014 letter included comments regarding NW Natural's projections of the upper Alluvium WBZ out and under the Willamette River. In an e-mail sent February 21, 2014, NW Natural provided geologic cross-sections that graphically depict a proposal for the projections based on drilling observations made in borings located along geologic cross section E-E'. DEQ requests that the Model Update Report include geologic cross-sections revised consistent with the NW Natural's proposed approach. For clarification, revisions made to the geologic cross-sections should be incorporated into the corresponding stratigraphic sections developed for the model (e.g., see figure 4, 6, 8, and 10 of the Model Update Report).

Table 3 Summary of Model Assumptions and Limitations

Summary of Model Assumptions and Limitations						
Model Input/Boundary Condition	Initial Assignment in Model (range)	Source Information for Model Assignment	Final Assignment in Model (post- calibration)	Potential Bias/Limitation of Model Assignment/Assumption	Cause-Effect from Changes to Assignments during Calibration	Anticipated Sensitivity during Model Calibration/Uncertaint after Calibration
Horizontal Hydraulic Conductivity (Kh)	Fill WBZ: 10 ft/d; Upper Silt WBZ: 0.5 ft/d; Upper Alluvium WBZ: 2 to 200 ft/d (spatially variable); Lower and Deep Lower Alluvium WBZ: 100 to 1,250 ft/d (spatially variable)	Average Values used for hillst assignment derived from On-Site Step Tests discussed in Section 2.4.1 for the Alluvium WBZs, for the Fill and Upper Sit WBZs same starting values as 2011 Model	To be completed after final calibration	Assigning average Kh for modeled strat units could present higher than actual Khs for some areas that could result in a high bias to groundwater flowfrecharge to pumping stress in some areas of the model causing less dawdown in pumping wells (resulting in higher than actual achievable yields) and less drawdown influence to distant observation wells; lower Kh than actual will present an opposite influence.	Increasing Kh during calibration will dampen/decrease water level response to pumping, decreasing Kh during calibration will magnify/increase water level response to pumping.	Hydraulic conductivity is anticipated to be a key parameter during calibration. The range for calibration was established from site-specific testing. The large dataset available for calibration should provide a tight constraint through the calibration process. Consequently, it is anticipated that the uncertainty surrounding the final set of hydraulic conductivity values determined for each WBZ will be adequately constrained.
Vertical Hydraulic Conductivity (Kv)	Horizontal to vertical hydraulic conductivity anisotropy ratios (Kh/Kv) of 10 to 100 for all units	Horizontal hydraulic conductivities as discussed above; anisotropy range from Spitz and Moreno (1996) and Freeze and Cherry (1979)	To be completed after final calibration	Vertical hydraulic conductivity will affect both lateral and vertical flows between and within the units. Higher anisotropy ratios will produce more lateral flows, and lower anisotropy values will result in increasing vertical flows.	Higher anisotropy will produce greater lateral flo	The same discrete 2 as the horizontal hydraulic conductivity applies here.
Confined Storage Coefficient	10 ⁻⁴ for all WBZs; will vary between 10 ⁻³ to 10 ⁻⁵ during calibration	Freeze and Cherry (1979) Average Values used for initial assignment derived from On-site step tests for Alluvium WBZs; range from Spitz and Moreno (1996) and Freeze and Cherry (1979)	To be completed after final calibration	The storage coefficient affects the volume of water released or absorbed by the squifer matrix per unit change in head in the aquifer.	will strongly affect the shape of	Model calibration will be sensitive to the confined storage coefficient values particularly in matching the shape of the observed hydrographs. The time series of site-specific water levels provide a tight constraint in determining the final parameter value. Therefore, it is anticipated that the uncertaint surrounding the final parameter value will be adequately constrained.
Unconfined Storage Coefficient	Starting value of 0.05; will vary between 0.05 to 0.3	Starting value based on previous modeling efforts, range from Spitz and Moreover 1999 and Freeze and 1979)	To be completed after final calibration	This parameter determines the change in storage in the water table aquifer over tidal cycles and from time-varying recharge. It is often mistakenly referred to as specific yield. In a tidal setting, it represents the draining and filling of soils over a tidal cycle, which is much too short for specific yield to be attained. Therefore, the calibrated value is expected to be well below typical values for specific yield.	Same as the confined storage coefficient except changes in parameter value will at levels in the water tably the model.	Same comments as for confined storage coefficient but applies only to wells completed in model layers where the unconfined water table occurs.
Time-Step for Transient Simulations	Minutes to an hour	Will be determined based on numerical stability requirements. and the temporal resolution of the data being calibrated to.	To be completed after final calibration	Time-steps (or stress but in MODFLOW) need to be short enough to represent tidally varying hydrographs in the data. Generally, hourly stress periods are more than adequate to do this. However, shorter stress periods may be used if they do not result in excessively long run times.	This is not a calibration parameter.	There is no anticipated by with of the model results with respect to stress periods of an hour or less are used.
Model Boundary Conditions						
Upland Constant Head	Initial values for each set-point test period in Phase 1 will be based on data at upland well. Initial values will vary between the set-point test based on monitoring data.	Based on water levels in five wells (MW-9-29, MW-12-36, NWN-3-17, NWN-4-15, and NWN-5-20) completed in the fill	To be completed after final calibration	Upland boundary heads have a direct effect on fluxes across the boundary. A mis-specification of the constant head boundary could result in greater or less flux across the boundary and to the pumping source. A mis-specified constant head boundary could result in inaccurate fluxes at the boundary. Changes to head boundary conditions will remain within observed water level ranges established at the five upland fill wells.	During calibration, the upland boundary heads will be adjusted to represent upland boundary flux to achieve a better match between predicted and observed water levels.	The model celibration is expected to be moderately sensitive to the upland constant head boundary condition. If the modeled upland boundary flow is substantially different from reality, it will show as a poor match to water levels at upland wells. The celibration dataset provides sufficient constraint on the upland boundary heads such that the final constant head values will produce the appropriate boundary flux. Consequently, uncertainty in the final parameter and the associated uncertainty in the model predictions are anticipated to be well constrained.

Final Hydraulic CS and Containment System GW Model Update Report NW Natural Gasco Site March 2014 000029-02.26

Summary of Comments on Final Hydraulic Source Control and Containment System Groundwater Model Update Report

Number: 1	Author: Author	Subject: Text Box Date	: 5/13/2014 1:57:19 PM
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Number: 2	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:54:26 PM
Should point o	ut the following:		
While vertical k constrain the u	C is not measured directory	ctly and is assumed from lite	erature values, the water level dataset available to evaluate during calibration wi
Number: 3	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:54:05 PM
More narrative response in de	related to cause-effect eper layers; Lower anis	t is needed here. Intro sent otropy will have the opposi	ence is good, but should finish with "resulting in an increased drawdown te effect".
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Number: 5	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:54:40 PM
example: Decr	easing Storage Coeffic have an opposite effec	ients in the model will resul	of water level hydrographs will be to changes in storage coefficient. For it in increased amplitude and response in the modeled water level hydrographs.
Number: 6	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:54:48 PM
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Table 3
Summary of Model Assumptions and Limitations

			Final Assignment in		Cause-Effect from Changes to	T
Model Input/Boundary Condition	Initial Assignment in Model (range)	Source Information for Model Assignment	Model (post- calibration)	Potential Bias/Limitation of Model Assignment/Assumption	Assignments during Calibration	Anticipated Sensitivity during Model Calibration/Uncertaint after Calibration
Upstream River No-Flow	No-flow	Historical gradients in the different units generally support flow from upland to the river, parallel to the model boundaries	To be completed after final calibration	If the boundary is sufficiently close to the pumping wells, then it is possible that the capture zone could extend to the model boundary.	If the capture zone from the HC&C pumping wells reaches the upstream boundary of the model, then it could over predict the drawdowns simulated in the model.	The model calibration is not expected to be sensitive to the no- flow assumption at the upstream boundary because it is more than 2,000 feet from the upstream-most HC&C well, which is sufficiently far away such that it will not be affected by the boundary condition. This has been demonstrated in previous modeling exercises by the extent of the capture zone associates with the upstream-most HC&C well. Therefore, the uncertainty in the model predictions resulting from this assumption is minimal.
Downstream River . No-Flow	No-flow	Historical gradients in the different units generally support flow from upland to the river, parallel to the model boundaries	To be completed after final calibration	If the boundary is sufficiently close to the pumping wells, then it is possible that the capture zone could extend to the model boundary.	the downstream boundary of the model, then it could over predict	The model calibration is not expected to be sensitive to the no- flow assumption at the downstream boundary because it is approximately 1,000 feet from the downstream-most HC&C with White closer than the upstream boundary to the HC&C system, the U.S. Moorings basin is located that the HC&C system and the downstream boundary. The HC&C system and the downstream boundary to the HC&C system who hC&C system capture zone is constrained by the U.S. Moorings basin and would not reach the downstream boundary. Therefore, the uncertainty in the model predictions resulting from this assumption is minimal.
Basalt No-Flow	No-flow 	Historical modeling assumed that significant flow zones do not exist in the baselt	To be completed after final calibration	Additional source of groundwater flow from the basalt to the Lower and Deep Lower Alluvium WBZs is not represented in the model.	If there are significant flow zones from the bases into the Lower and Deeler 3 Alluvium WBZs, representing the basel as a no-flow boundary could lead to underestimating the groundwater flow on the Gasco and Sitronic sites and overestimate capture effectiveness.	Groundwater flow that is not repeated in the model should be exhibited by an inability of the re- Lower and Deep Lower Alluvium wells. Additional sources of groundwater flow can be modeled as necessary. Either constant head or specified flux boundaries can be added to any model layer in the Lower Alluvium or Deep Lower Alluvium.
Recharge	Recharge for paved areas will be set to 2 inches per year, recharge for unpaved areas will be based on precipitation data and can vary from 0 to daily total precipitation observed during the test period	For paved areas, 2011 model calibration; for unpaved areas will be based on observed precipitation at rain gages in the vicinity of the site	To be completed after final calibration	If infiftration is mis-species 5 en water levels in the Fill, Silt, and Upper Alluvium 5 includations.	reflected in the write level data	The water levels in the Fill WBZ will be sensitive to the recharge boundary condition. The water level data collected during the full system tests provides an adequate constraint on the recharge boundary condition.

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Number: 1 Author: Author Subject: Sticky Note Date: 5/13/2014 1:55:33 PM Basing proof from previous modeling has a high level of uncertainty. EPA is curious if observation data, such as drawdown influence in the area around this no flow boundary from pumping tests, has been observed. The level of uncertainty for this boundary condition is probably moderate without observation/data in the moorings basin. Author: Author Subject: Sticky Note Date: 5/13/2014 1:55:22 PM It is unclear what model this is referring to. Using a model for supporting initial assignments such as this no-flow boundary is OK, but the "historical" model used should be proven to be one to have demonstrated high calibration with groundwater levels in the lower alluvium and basalt layer - this should be noted. If it doesn't, it will need to be noted in the "Uncertainty" column (far right) Subject: Sticky Note Author: Author Date: 5/13/2014 1:55:28 PM These statements should be moved to the "Bias/Limitations" column. Number: 4 Author: Author Subject: Sticky Note Date: 5/13/2014 1:55:51 PM EPA has 3 points for consideration: 1) These statements should be moved to the "cause-effect" column. The table is currently missing sensitivity/uncertainty description; please describe. 2) End of first sentence, insert: "...with hydraulic parameters set to reasonable/data supported assignments". 3) Include at end of this text statement: "These additional boundaries will add flow to the system and reduce over-estimates of capture effectiveness." Author: Author Subject: Sticky Note Date: 5/13/2014 1:55:45 PM Suggest inserting the following at end of sentence: "..... resulting in an under/over-estimation of flow entering the groundwater system and under/over-estimation of capture effectiveness at the Gasco/Siltronics site". Author: Author Subject: Sticky Note Date: 5/13/2014 1:55:39 PM Suggest including the following:

"Over-estimating recharge results in underestimating capture and dampens water level response, while under-estimating recharge will have the opposite effect."

Table 3
Summary of Model Assumptions and Limitations

Outman y or moder Assumptions and climations						
Model Input/Boundary Condition	Initial Assignment in Model (range)	Source Information for Model Assignment	Final Assignment in Model (post- calibration)	Potential Bias/Limitation of Model Assignment/Assumption	Cause-Effect from Changes to Assignments during Calibration	Anticipated Sensitivity during Model Calibration/Uncertaint after Calibration
General Head Boundary at this Upper Allu ² On the NotVices Corner Below the Willamette River	Values will be assigned to represent predicted flows to this reach of the Willamette River in the City of Portland Deep Aquifer Yield Model and the USGS Portland Basin Model.	City of Portland Deep Aquifer Yield Model and the USGS Portland Basin Model	To be completed after final calibration	Underestimating the flow from the far shore of the river will result in prediction of a HCSC capture zone that extends too far out beneath the river.	the City of Port 3 ep Aquiter	The extent of the HC&C capture zone beneath the river will be sensitive to this boundary condition. However, previous work by the City of Perfadan and USGS provides to sense the provide sense of adequately representing this boundary condition.
Representation of Water Table in the Fill WBZ	The initial water table on the Fill WBZ will be based on data collected at the start of each setpoint test period.	Site-specific data col 6 for to pumping	To be completed after final calibration	The initial water levels in the water table aquiter will be based on water level data from site wells 7 sees not pose an inherent limitation.	N/A	Model predictions in the Fill WBZ may be affected by the wetting and drying parameters used in the model. These parameters were be selected to provide numerical stability if the Fill WBZ becomes unsaturated during pumping or due to tidaliriver stage fluctuations. The uncertainty surrounding the final choice of these parameters and their effect on model predictions are anticipated to be minor.
Constant Head Boundary (Willamette River)	This will be 8 able and reflect river stage data.	Based on two transducers on the river, both located on the dock at the site	Not a calibration parameter	This is based on data and as such does not pose an inherent limitation.	N/A	The model predictions are directly affected by this input, however, there is no uncertainty surrounding the specification o this boundary condition. Hence, there is no uncertainty in the model predictions from this boundary condition.

Notes:

Notes:
Note = feet per day
HC&C = hydratilic control and containment
Kh = horizontal hydratilic conductivity
Ky = vertical hydratilic conductivity
N/A = not applicable
USGS = U.S., Geological Survey
WBZ = water bearing zone

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Number: 1	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:06 PM
EPA is curious v	vhether there is any si	te data that could be refere	nced.
The flows predi	cted by these regional	models should be provide	d at this location in the table.
Number: 2	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:22 PM
EPA is curious v	whether these models	are well calibrated in this lo	ocation. The answer has implications for the Uncertainty column.
Number: 3	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:22 PM
Information col A cause-effect of	umn, but should inclu description should be	opriate for the Potential Bia de a basis (analysis/other) f	s/Limitations column. The last sentence should be moved to the Source for why it is considered adequate. general head boundary flows would decrease HC&C capture effectiveness and
layers that this	here this boundary is l boundary will be assig	ocated. Reference to a ma ned should be added to th	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:06 PM ap should added to the model report would be helpful for the reader. The mode e Initial Assignment column.
		alibration and compatibility	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:29 PM with the Gasco Site Model in the location of this boundary assignment is in this location, then the uncertainty would appear to be high.
Number: 6	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:22 PM
Please identify	what wells and what d	ate are intended for use.	
Number: 7	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:22 PM
For considera drying/re-we wetting para	ation: MODFLOW etting numerical sta	models sometimes hav ability issues. If more v version of MODFLOW	e a coarser vertical discretization in the topmost layer to avoid vertical discretization is needed, care must be taken with the re- (surfact, NWT) should be considered. The aversion to adding
Number: 8	Author: Author	Subject: Sticky Note	Date: 5/13/2014 1:56:22 PM
Please note the	layers that this bound	lary will be assigned.	